Literarcy week observed

CJR offers a collection of entertaining flubs from the nation's press culled from "The Lower Case": *Red Tape Holds Up New Bridge*.

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The Sixth Annual John Bartlow Martin Award for Public Service Magazine Journalism

As magazine writer and professor, John Bartlow Martin advanced public-interest journalism and inspired other journalists to make a difference with their own words. His colleagues, successors, friends and students, in conjunction with Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism, wish to cite the year's most significant public-service magazine article.

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Judges: Robert Love, Senior Features Editor, *Rolling Stone;* **Michael Moore,** Editor, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists;* **Virginia Postrel,** Editor, *Reason* magazine; **David Weir,** Investigative Editor, *Mother Jones.*

For information and entry blanks: Jan Boudart, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University, 1845 Sheridan Road, Evanston, Illinois 60208, (708) 491-5661 Fax# (708) 491-3956.

al health-care system. That system, like others found in Europe, does provide insurance through employers and has mechanisms to provide coverage for those not connected to the workforce. These systems also control costs through fee schedules for doctors and hospitals, something that is unlikely in the U.S. because of strong opposition from providers as well as the press, a point I made in my article.

KEEP ON ROCKIN'

Thank you for the bouncy nugget on newspaper rock bands ("It's Only Rock 'n' Roll," CJR September/October). But to compare our band in St. Pete, The Fabulous Nosecaps, to Philly's Bing Bell Band is like comparing The Stones to Randy and the Rainbows. We declare ourselves the longest-running newspaper band — and the best.

We laugh at the Bing Bell Band and the pathetic little newsletter it represents — *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. We challenge them to a battle of the bands, proceeds going to charity. And, by the way, what a silly name for a band!

ROY PETER CLARK
"THE DOCTOR OF ROCK," KEYBOARDIST,
THE FABULOUS NOSECAPS
ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.

I knew we weren't alone when we formed our journalists' rock band in 1989. The Ink Stained Wretches made the rounds at northern New Jersey parties that year, performing such songs as "She's Got a Confidential Source" and "Folo the Ledger," which detailed an unfortunate requirement placed on reporters who were not at *The Star-Ledger* of Newark.

Along with our journalistic rock (not to be confused with rock journalism), our electric band gave birth to an acoustic spinoff, Liberal Media Bias, which performed a few folk-flavored gigs. The band did not survive job changes but left an indelible stamp on its founders and audience. Cassettes are available.

ALAN "WOODSTEIN" ABBEY
ALBANY, N.Y.
MIKE "SPIKE" WALD
MONTCLAIR, N.J.

THAT JAMA VERDICT

Wayne Smith's "JAMA Knows Best," (CJR, September/October) is a welcome addition to a particularly troubling episode in American medical journalism. Smith, however, only scratched the surface.

Was no journalist surprised that President Kennedy's military pathologists — James Humes, M.D., J. Thornton Boswell, M.D., and Pierre Finck, M.D. — gave "exclusive" interviews to their personal friend and former military pathologist *JAMA* editor George D. Lundberg, M.D., and his delegate, Dennis L. Breo?

Was it not odd that all of the interviewees refused to appear with Lundberg before the press to answer questions — particularly after Lundberg called the *JAMA* JFK coverage "open *JAMA* presentations"? Was it not even more unusual that, in a contravention of the canons of scientific discourse, none of the pathologists answered even one question of the many put forward in letters to the editor from physician colleagues? The letters were selected by *JAMA*'s own editors as worth publishing and, presumably, of being answered. Is it not odd that JFK's pathologists had Lundberg and Breo report in *JAMA* that they would answer no further questions, then, astonishingly, one month after refusing to answer physician letters in *JAMA* (October 7, 1992), Humes answered author Gerald Posner's questions for his recently published *Case Closed*? Not surprisingly, the serious issues raised by physicians' letters in *JAMA* were not mentioned by Posner. Why?

In *JAMA*, the autopsists claimed tha JFK's skull wound was 10-cm lower thar currently accepted by government expert who base their conclusions on "authenticat ed" photographs and X-rays. *JAMA* failed t ask the autopsists about this enormous dis crepancy and the national press ignored it. I the disputed photographs and X-rays ar authentic and accurate, how and why did th autopsists manage to "miss" the corre location of the skull wound by placing it 1 cm too low, and then "miss" the back wou by locating it 5-cm too high, as the forens pathologists of the House Select Committ on Assassinations determined in 1979?

How did *JAMA*'s "peer-review" fa checkers miss the fact that AMA meml Charles Crenshaw, M.D., who *JAM* claimed was not in JFK's trauma room. named in Warren Commission testimony at least four Parkland physicians as hav been there? Why has *JAMA*'s edit Lundberg, not done the honorable thing published a retraction?

GARY L. AGUILAR, M
SAN FRANCISCO , CA

THE LIE

S. Lee Kanner, the journalist who conce his Jewish identity for fear of losing hi on a small-town daily ("The Lie," September/October), might be interest the experience of one who, in a similar ation, took the opposite tack.

Like Kanner, I was a New York Jew broke into journalism as sports editor